

APPROVED: Meeting No. 24-92

ATTEST: 

MAYOR AND COUNCIL
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND
Meeting No. 23-92

June 1, 1992

The Mayor and Council of Rockville, Maryland, convened in Worksession in the Council Chamber, Rockville City Hall, 111 Maryland Avenue, Rockville, Maryland, on June 1, 1992, at 7:30 p.m.

PRESENT

Mayor Douglas M. Duncan

Councilmember James F. Coyle

Councilmember Rose G. Krasnow

Councilmember James T. Marrinan

Councilmember David Robbins

In attendance: City Manager Bruce Romer and City Clerk Sharon Gran.

Re: Worksession on FY93
Operating Budget

Capital Improvements Program

Mr. Romer indicated that a number of changes have been proposed for CIP projects as a result of discussions in earlier worksessions. The following projects were then reviewed:

- o Baltimore Road Sidewalk/Street Lighting. This project could be shifted to FY96 without impacting Peerless Rockville's plans for the Wire Hardware property. It was agreed to move this project to FY96.
- o Elevator/Stairway. This project was originally intended to be funded by developer contributions when either the Middle Lane or Pier One sites were developed. If it were to be moved

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up now, it would be at City expense. It was discussed that this is a complex project which has not yet been designed.

Councilmember Krasnow expressed concern that this elevator may not be used once it is constructed.

It was agreed that one-half of the proposed FY93 funding would be approved, that is, \$72,000. These funds would be used for the design of the elevator/stairway (\$24,000), and additional monies would be available should it be decided to move forward with the project prior to FY94.

- o Grandin Avenue Sidewalk. The question of special assessments for sidewalks and the equity issue were discussed. Mayor Duncan noted that this sidewalk had been requested for access to the Lone Oak Center and was presented as a safety issue because of the traffic on Grandin. This project was advanced to FY93.

- o North Street. This project was recommended to be funded in FY94.

- o Seven Locks Road Dead End. This project was moved out one year, to FY94, to give staff an opportunity to pursue joint funding from Montgomery County, the primary beneficiary of this project.

- o Sidewalk Links. It was agreed that funding for the Wootton Parkway sidewalk and the portion of Stratton Drive to Potomac Woods Park (\$5,000) would be included in the FY93 CIP.

- o Watts Branch Traffic Control. It was noted that the traffic circle installed on Watts Branch has not deterred speeding or reduced traffic accidents. A final position on this matter, however, has not yet been received from the Watts Branch Traffic Advisory Committee. It was agreed that funding for this project would remain in the CIP with the clarification that circles would not be installed.

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- o Arterial Street Lighting. The priority listing of projects was approved.

Sewer Fund

Mr. Romer advised that the City would have to absorb the increased treatment costs from Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission as a result of action by the District of Columbia Government to recover costs for idle capacity at the Blue Plains Treatment Plant. It is recommended that the rate be increased now, from \$2.40 per 1,000 gallons to \$2.51 per 1,000 gallons, in order to fund these mandated costs.

It was noted that the D.C. Government has not yet adopted their budget and, following lengthy discussion, it was agreed that no action would be taken to increase the City's sewer rate until more detailed information is available.

General Fund

- o Playground Fees. Councilmember Robbins expressed concern with how collection of the fees at the various playgrounds would be handled. Councilmember Coyle feels strongly that the summer playgrounds should continue to be provided free of charge. Councilmember Krasnow commented that there are some children who attend only a few days, and charging a fee would discourage their attendance.

Following discussion, it was agreed that a fee would not be charged this summer for the playground programs.

- o Courthouse Square Concerts. It was agreed that four TGIF concerts would be added during the month of August for a total cost of \$2,400.

- o K.A.T. Program. It was agreed that no action would be taken at this time to extend the K.A.T. Program to schools in which all-day kindergarten had been eliminated pending a final

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determination by Montgomery County Public Schools. The Recreation and Parks staff is prepared to move forward with this program at Twinbrook, Beall and Ritchie Park Elementary Schools should it be necessary and appropriate.

- o Rotary Run Fireworks. In response to Councilmember Krasnow's concern regarding inclusion of fireworks at the Rotary Run, it was agreed that the survey at this year's event would include questions regarding the fireworks and, once the results of the survey are made available, a decision would be made with respect to fireworks at the July 1993 event.

- o Outside Agency Requests.

- Southern Christian Leadership Conference. Funding in the amount of \$10,000 has been requested to purchase computer equipment for a newly established computer learning center to support training needs of youth in Lincoln Park. Discussion ensued regarding the most appropriate way to handle this request, and it was agreed that the City would commit up to \$10,000 in funds for computers with the proviso that the City would retain ownership of the equipment.

- MOMS Program. Concern was expressed that this is another social service activity which should be funded through the County. It was noted that this is part of the caregivers' request and, given the fact that the other caregivers' requests were consistent with previous years, funding in the amount of \$5,000 was approved in FY93 for this program.

- Hispanics United for Rockville. Funding of \$21,000 will be provided through the Community Development Block Grant.

- Rockville Arts Place (RAP). FY93's funding level will be 10% less than FY92. Councilmember Marrinan commented that long-term funding of RAP needs to be addressed. It was agreed that a worksession would be held with RAP some time after Labor Day to discuss future funding.

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Lincoln Park Neighborhood Enhancement Program. Mayor Duncan requested that the neighborhood committee review again the accelerated curb ramp program in light of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Staff will follow-up with the committee on the legal requirements of the ADA and rehabilitation of the ballfield in Lincoln Park.

Admission and Amusement Tax

No change will be made to accommodate Putt-Putt's request for tax relief.

Impact of Piggyback Tax

Kevin Deckard, Finance Director, reported that a realistic revenue projection as a result of the piggyback tax is \$278,000. The factors impacting this revenue flow were outlined.

FY93 Tax Rate

Councilmember Krasnow expressed concern that reducing the property tax rate would create a perception problem in that municipalities had argued that any changes made to the piggyback tax should include municipalities. Mayor Duncan disagreed. It was discussed that lowering the tax rate would provide some relief to residents who are experiencing increased taxes at the County level.

Mayor Duncan recommended that any revenue realized from the increased piggyback tax be returned to the residents as a reduction in the tax rate. This equates to a reduction of 1.34 cents.

Councilmember Marrinan indicated that the Mayor and Council have an obligation to offset some of the increases to the extent possible. He suggested a more conservative approach, that is, a one-cent reduction. Once the actual amount of increased revenue from the piggyback tax is realized, this issue can be addressed in a "more solid fashion."

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Mayor Duncan proposed that the additions approved earlier in the evening for the MOMS Program, SCLC computer learning center and four T.G.I.F. concerts in Courthouse Square be funded through the Mayor and Council targets of opportunity fund in FY93.

Councilmember Krasnow proposed a tax rate reduction of 1.25 cents; Councilmember Marrinan remained committed to a one-cent reduction. Following discussion, Mayor Duncan, Councilmember Coyle and Councilmember Robbins agreed to a reduction in the FY93 tax rate of 1.34 cents; thus, the new tax rate for FY93 would be 80.66 cents per \$100 of assessed valuation.

Re: Executive Session

Upon motion of Councilmember Marrinan, duly seconded and unanimously passed, the Mayor and Council convened in Executive Session at 9:25 p.m., pursuant to Section 10-508(a)(1)(i) of the State Government Article, Annotated Code of Maryland, to discuss personnel issues.

Re: Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council, the meeting was adjourned at 10:40 p.m., to convene again in General Session at 7:30 p.m. on June 8, 1992, or at the call of the Mayor.